

C O N F I D E N T I A L

21 March 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Reference

SUBJECT: COSATI Meeting, 16 March 1966

1. The Chairman announced two new observers: Dr. Cummings of NLM, and Dick Spencer of the Patent Office.

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3. Bill Knox will go to London in the next few weeks to attend an OECD meeting on national information policy. He expects all member countries to be represented. Specifically, the meeting will discuss the SDC report and the distribution and recoverability of "unpublished" reports. Discussion will probably include the feasibility of establishing a national clearinghouse in each country. As an aside, he noted that a recent Russian visitor refers to the distribution of unpublished reports as "his next big problem."

4. The Chairman announced that Curt Fritz is on loan to his office from the Department of State for one year, primarily to help implement a national system.

5. Mr. Knox reported renewed USIA interest in S&T information overseas. There has even been a tentative hint that the [] USIA posts might play a role in funneling S&T information to the U.S.

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6. The Department of Defense and NASA have responded to an appeal for funds to keep the National Standard Reference Data System afloat. It is the fervent hope of Bill Knox and all the others concerned that this is the last rescue operation that will be required for the NSRDS. Burt Adkinson focused on the basic problem of multiple agency funding of clearly identified and assigned functions. From his long experience he considers such funding inefficient and very difficult to manage. [] stated that it is national policy to avoid multiple funding and that each exception is very closely scrutinized. Multiple funding should not be confused

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with decentralized activities. In the case of the NSRDS, the contributors are widely scattered but the individual contributing activities are separately supported. Within the system the National Standard Reference Data Center in the National Bureau of Standards should be considered one discrete activity and should be funded by its parent agency. The Federal Council for Science and Technology will review this program in April.

7. The charter of SATCOM will be distributed to COSATI members and observers. It will be concerned with the structure, flow, and transfer of information and insight. The emphasis will be on the private sector. It will be funded by the National Science Foundation.

8. The Secretary distributed an action paper from the International Information Activities Panel, dealing with A Policy for International Use of U.S. Government Machine-readable Information. Comments will be welcomed any time before the middle of April.

9. The main feature of the meeting was a presentation by Jack Hilf on Department of Interior plans for a water resources information system. This appears to result from a remarkably good balance of initiative and action between users and suppliers of information. At the urging of the Federal Council's Committee on Water Resources Research and following staffing by its Subcommittee on Storage and Retrieval of Information, the Department of Interior has established an Office of Water Resources Research and, in January of this year, set up within the Office a Water Resources Scientific Information Center. This center will serve as a capping agency in its subject field, coordinating the information handling activities of the 51 research centers established by Congress in 1964. The law specifies that the President designate a coordinating body and a place to organize and index information, including information on on-going projects. This latter responsibility has been assigned to the Science Information Exchange. The interplay between SIE and the Center appears to be very close. SIE has prepared a thesaurus compatible with Project LEX and similar efforts that will be ready for reproduction in the next few weeks. In this field of rapidly changing technology and great pressure from the highest level of government, it is not surprising that great emphasis is being put on current awareness and SDI. An announcement bulletin known as RECAP (originally REclamation Current Awareness Program; now Recap/itulation/ of Water Resources Information) is already being issued. This is supplemented by an SDI system with a few new wrinkles. A fairly full abstract is prepared and printed on an IBM size card. The card is perforated so that a 3 x 5 copy of the abstract can be torn out of the full card and dropped in a file, while the stub is either discarded or used to order the full text of the article or report. Mr. Hilf estimated that five thousand articles per year will be abstracted and that this is the great majority of all articles of value. At present

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there are 3500 customers for SDI out of a potential clientele of about ten thousand. Other services will include printed indexes, special bibliographies, microfiche copies of documents, state-of-the-art reviews (mainly by contracts or other agreements), and a referral service. Experience has shown that an interest profile with 18 keywords, about 4 of which are asterisked to indicate major interest areas, can be effectively matched with an average of 20 keywords in the index, using asterisked keywords to indicate major subjects discussed in the document. The Center intends to pioneer a program of combined SDI abstract card and microfiche wherein selected documents of high pertinency to a user's interest will be sent to him in microfiche form simultaneous with his receipt of abstract card announcing it. Mr. Hilf estimates that a total of 1,500,000 microfiches will be required each year.

10. SIE has already issued two "Blue Books" for the Water Resources Information System, volume one listing 2,000 federally supported research projects and volume two listing perhaps half as many non-federal projects.

11. The budget for the Center is expected to run \$608,000 per year, plus \$200,000 from Reclamation Bureau funds. The Center does not plan to sell any of its products or services. All sales to the public would be through the Clearinghouse.

12. Ed Stiles has drafted an action paper on a revised descriptive cataloging standard. He displayed a draft author list of corporate authors that is being tested now. This file is being kept up to date at the Clearinghouse. At a later stage, each entry will have a code. The code will tie with the standard codes that the Bureau of the Budget (Bill Cunningham) is setting up for each firm doing business with the government. Jerry Orne, Chairman of the Z-39 Committee, has also been consulted. Burt Adkinson pointed out that the abstract journals have considerable experience with establishing corporate authors including, in some cases, as many as 50 percent that are foreign.

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13. In the absence of Ruth Davis, Harold Wooster, Secretary of the Panel on Information Sciences Technology, reported that the compendium, identifying about 1150 R&D reports in information handling, is now ready for reproduction. He called for volunteers to run off 500 copies. (Following the meeting, I arranged with D/OCR to perform this task as one of the few tangible contributions that an intelligence representative can make to COSATI.)

14. John Sherrod announced a program of interchange between library school faculties and government workers. He estimates that there are one hundred full-time instructors in the field of information handling and documentation at the graduate level. He hopes to place ten of them this summer in U.S. Government

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agencies. He feels that they will contribute significantly to evaluation of present and planned programs and also that they will become ideal focal points for recruiting of government employees. At the same time, he would like to place government employees on the faculties of summer schools, perhaps for a period as short as three or six weeks. While endorsing these programs, Bill Knox suggested that government agencies could make some progress on their own by assigning some of their own people to their information handling activities, perhaps for a period of three months.

15. Mel Day called for written comments on the action paper distributed at the start of the meeting. He said that the companion paper on domestic availability of machine-readable information is now in draft.

(Before the formal meeting began, I asked Mel Day how his remote console program is coming along. He said the consoles are now being installed and expects them to be working in about three weeks. His aim is to have a remote query capability that can be operated by an average researcher or manager with virtually no training in systems operation.)



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16. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 26 April 1966. This is six days later than previously announced.



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Chief Reference Librarian

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